

March 1, 1958

Dr. Sheldon A. Jacobson
VA Hospital
Vancouver, Washington

Dear Jake:

I hope you don't mind my calling you that. We all did at St. Albans when it wasn't Commander Jacobson.

It was good to hear from you. It's a sign of the passing years that I recall with some consternation how much older you seemed 15 years ago than you do to me now, which is also a way of excusing a presumptuous familiarity. But too, the freshmen seem younger and more callow every year.

I think you may be interested to hear that I'm back in Medicine. At least I have a job now as chairman of a recently organized department of genetics in the medical school here. This means spending a little time in the rather futile task of teaching medical students, and rather more in the main task of a research and a postgraduate program. In spite of it all, I still manage to keep at least half-time working in the lab with my own hands, which I have to do to keep alive in research. My wife Esther and I are continuing our collaboration on various aspects of the genetics of bacteria. We took four months off last summer and fall on a Fulbright visit to Australia, which we enjoyed very much indeed. My own time there was mainly in Burnet's Institute in Melbourne, where I had some respite from bacteria and started some work on the genetics of antibody formation in lymph-node cells of rats. We also toured all round the coast, from a visit to the Barrier Reef in Queensland to a stopover in Perth in Western Australia on the way home. We were greeted and treated magnificently. Our trip to and fro was rather too hurried, but we did spend a week in India (lecturing in Calcutta and Bombay to help pay the fare). If you haven't been there you don't know the meaning of population density. And another week in Italy (near Portofino) which was quite glorious, with some friends. I'm afraid we're getting too jaded as travellers, however. We'd already been to Paris and Britain for a month earlier last year; are planning to go again to Stockholm this summer, but are not looking forward to it as much more than another business trip.

We've never been in the state of Washington (almost the only part of the country that has eluded us so far) & don't be too surprised if you do see us sometime. ~~If~~ If you're ever in this neighborhood don't fail to reciprocate.

Yours sincerely,

Joshua Lederberg